Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 03894 211557Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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P R 211517Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7277
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 3894

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV RH US UK
SUBJ: RHODESIA: CONTACT WITH INTERNAL NATIONALISTS

REF: STATE 301678

1. UNFORTUNATELY, LIAISON WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE WILL BE DIFFICULT OUTSIDE OF RHODESIA WHILE THE INTERNAL TALKS ARE TAKING PLACE. RESPONSIBLE AND INFORMED UANC (MUZOREWA) PEOPLE NORMALLY RESIDENT IN LUSAKA WITH WHOM THE EMBASSY MAINTAINS FAIRLY REGULAR CONTACT ARE OUT OF TOWN. THE SAME IS GENERALLY TRUE FOR THE SITHOLE REPS, ALTHOUGH A LEGAL ADVISOR HAS RECENTLY RETURNED. THESE PEOPLE FOR THE MOST PART ARE SENIOR MEMBERS OF THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS AND ARE NOW PARTICIPATING IN THE DISCUSSIONS.

2. EVEN WHEN THESE INDIVIDUALS ARE HERE, THEY HAVE NO MEANS
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 LUSAKA 03894 211557Z

OF REGULAR COMMUNICATION ON MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE WITH THEIR CHIEFS IN SALISBURY. TELEPHONIC CONTACT IS FREQUENT BUT CONVERSATIONS ARE KEPT VERY GENERAL BECAUSE OF THE ASSUMPTION THAT ALL CALLS TO AND FROM RHODESIA ARE MONITORED. SUBSTANTIVE CONSULTATION IS RESTRICTED TO PERSONAL DISCUSSIONS WHICH OCCUR DURING THE FREQUENT TRAVEL BY VARIOUS LEADERS AND THEIR DEPUTIES. WE KNOW FOR A FACT, FOR INSTANCE, THAT CHINAMANO'S

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

ONLY CONTACT WITH NKOMO IS WHEN THE TWO GET TOGETHER AND WE BELIEVE THE SAME TO BE TRUE OF THE UANC REPS WHEN THEY ARE HERE IN LUSAKA.

3. BOTH SITHOLE AND MUZOREWA HAVE REPRESENTATIVES IN BLANTYRE BUT IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING FROM THE EMBASSY LILONGWE OFFICIAL STATIONED THERE THAT THE SITUATION IS THE SAME AS HERE IN LUSAKA. NONE ARE PRESENT THERE AT THIS MOMENT WHILE DISCUSSIONS ARE IN PROGRESS.

4. I WOULD ASSUME THAT SITHOLE PARTICULARLY AND PERHAPS MUZOREWA AND SOME OF HIS DEPUTIES WILL TRAVEL AGAIN AS SOON AS THERE IS A BREAK IN THE TALKS. MY SUGGESTION, THEREFORE, IS THAT THE DEPARTMENT PREPARE INSTRUCTIONS FOR A GROUP OF EMBASSIES IN THE AREA (INCLUDING LAGOS) SO THAT WE CAN GET OUR MESSAGE ACROSS WHEN CONTACTS OCCUR AS THEY INEVITABLY WILL.

5. SINCE THIS EMBASSY DOES MAINTAIN FAIRLY ROUTINE CONTACT WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE REPS WHEN THEY ARE HERE, ANY CONTACT FOR THE PURPOSES SUGGESTED REFTEL WOULD NOT BE OUT OF ORDER. AS DESCRIBED ABOVE, THESE INDIVIDUALS ARE AWARE OF PROBABLE RHODESIAN SURVEILLANCE OF COMMUNICATIONS, AND WE WOULD JUDGE THAT THEY WOULD REMAIN DISCREET.

6. OF COURSE, THE BEST WAY TO KEEP IN CONTACT WITH
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PAGE 03 LUSAKA 03894 211557Z

NATIONALISTS IN SALISBURY WOULD BE TO SEND SOMEONE THERE FOR A VISIT. IT IS DIFFICULT, HOWEVER, TO IMAGINE ANY U.S. OFFICIAL GOING THERE NOW WHOSE PRESENCE WOULD NOT BE USED BY THE RHODESIANS TO INDICATE SUPPORT OR COLLUSION IN THEIR EFFORTS TO FIND AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. THE LEAST VISIBLE WOULD BE SOMEONE FROM THE EMBASSY IN PRETORIA, FOR INSTANCE, THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR. HOWEVER, IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THIS WOULD BE FAIRLY RISKY AT THIS STAGE. LOW

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